April 8, 1982

MEMORANDUM

FOR: HOWARD PHILLIPS

FROM: SUSAN PHILLIPS SP

Earlier this year, in response to a Freedom of Information request, I received a computer printout from the Department of Health and Human Services which purported to list contracts made by that department in Fiscal Year 1981. Listed on page 530 of that printout, which was run on 02/12/82, there is listed a contract with the National Education Association, Department of Audio-Visuals, 1201 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, contract #300-81-0421, which was signed on 09/30/81.

Upon receiving this information, I submitted an additional Freedom of Information request to the Dept. of Health and Human Services asking for copies of the contract application, related correspondence and reviews. I received several telephone calls from the Department asking me to clarify what it was I wanted, and that they had no record of a contract with N.E.A. I was finally told that the Freedom of Information request was being forwarded to the Department of Education because they felt that this was the department that had made the grant and not Health and Human Services.

I received a telephone call from Mrs. Beale of the Department of Education who again claimed that they had no record of a grant with the National Education Association. I again pulled out my computer prinout, read her the information, and gave her the contract number. I was informed that the contract number was for a contract with the Association for Educational Communications and Technology whose address was listed as 1126 16th Street, Washington, D.C. 20036. Several days later, I received copies of this contract. No explanation was offered by Mrs. Beale as to why the contract awarded to A.E.C.T. was listed on their printouts as having been with the National Education Association.

I called the A.E.C.T. office in Washington, D.C. and spoke with Dick Nibeck and asked Mr. Nibeck whether there was any connection between A.E.C.T. and the National Education Association. Mr. Nibeck informed me that A.E.C.T. used to part of N.E.A. (until 1969) and at that time was called the Department of Audo-Visuals. Mr. Nibeck suggested that there is probably a record somewhere in the government which shows this connection and that the computer information had never been changed. During the course of our conversation, I found out further that up until January of this year (1982), A.E.C.T. had leased office space and office support

staff from the National Education Association and did not move into their own offices down the street until January, 1982. In response to my question, "Do you still work closely with them?," Mr. Nibeck responded, "Oh yes, we talk to them." He mentioned also that A.E.C.T. still acts as consultants to the N.E.A. and serves with them on committees, etc.

The name of the project being developed under the contract with the Department of Education is "Basic Skills through Technology." The two year contract period is October 1, 1981 - September 30, 1983--and the dollar amount involved is $855,282.00.

The computer technology being developed in this contract is one of the areas that Dr. Onalee McGraw and Charlotte Iserbyt are especially concerned about. They fear that a system similar to the Humanistic Macos readers will be instituted in the development of computer teaching techniques. For example: (machines will be programmed to refuse to go on to the next subject until the "right" answer to a question is given by a student sitting at the terminal.)

(general idea, but needs expansion - not correctly explained.)

SP:ak

Enclosures